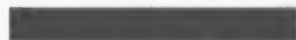


Ministry of Social Services



Plan for 2014-15

Statement from the Minister



*The Honourable June Draude
Minister of Social Services*

I am pleased to present the Ministry of Social Services' Plan for 2014-15 and beyond. The plan identifies the key actions we will undertake to support our Plan for Growth and vision for the future of our province. The Government's Direction and Budget for 2014-15 are built on the principle of *Steady Growth* to support a continued focus on sound economic growth and shared prosperity.

The Ministry of Social Services works with a diverse range of partners to build safe and vibrant community resources that can effectively respond to the province's steady growth, promote inclusion and enhance the quality of life for our province's most vulnerable residents.

In the coming year, we will continue the renewal of the child welfare system with our First Nations and Métis partners, including a focus on enhancing our prevention supports so more children can remain with their families. Our work on the province's Disability Strategy also continues; with the support of our partner ministries and the valued advice of our Citizen Consultation Team, we will focus on making Saskatchewan the best place in Canada for people with disabilities. We also continue to work closely with our partners in the housing sector to implement the *Housing Strategy for Saskatchewan* and increase the supply and affordability of homes in the province.

The plan includes many more initiatives which will contribute to improving the quality of life for Saskatchewan citizens and allow those who are most in need to benefit from the prosperity of our growing province.

The Ministry will report on progress made toward this plan, within the financial parameters provided, in the 2014-15 Annual Report.

Response to Government Direction

The Government is committed to establishing Saskatchewan as the best place to live, work and raise a family.

In October 2013, the first progress report on the *Saskatchewan Plan for Growth – Vision 2020 and Beyond* was released. Saskatchewan's growth is strong and steady. As Saskatchewan continues to move forward, the Government will support growth in 2014-15 through investing in people and needed infrastructure, encouraging economic growth, and through sound policy and financial decisions.

Saskatchewan's Vision

"... to be the best place in Canada – to live, to work, to start a business, to get an education, to raise a family and to build a life."

Sustaining growth and
opportunities for Saskatchewan

Meeting the challenges
of growth

Securing a better quality
of life for all
Saskatchewan people

Delivering responsive
and responsible
government

Government's vision and four goals provide the framework for ministries, agencies and third parties to align their programs and services to these priorities and meet the needs of Saskatchewan's citizens.

All ministries and agencies will report on progress in their 2014-15 annual reports. This supports Government's commitment to keep its promises and ensures greater transparency and accountability to the people of Saskatchewan.

Mission, Strategies and Actions

Mission Statement

We protect Saskatchewan's vulnerable people and support their inclusion in the province's prosperity.

CITIZEN-CENTRED SERVICES: Programs and services that set the foundation to meet our clients' basic needs

Strategy

Lead and support child welfare transformation

Key Actions

- ⇒ Work differently with First Nations and Métis partners to develop agreements for prevention and mandated services
- ⇒ Implement an easily accessible family support stream (Flexible Response)
- ⇒ Increase the availability of intensive family supports for high-risk child protection families

Strategy

Lead and support the *Housing Strategy for Saskatchewan*

Key Actions

- ⇒ Target housing programs and services to those in need by:
 - ⇒ Investing in new housing to meet the demands of population changes
 - ⇒ Renewing the social housing stock by replacing existing homes with newly constructed homes

Strategy

Improve quality of life and support community inclusion for people with disabilities

Key Actions

- ⇒ Continue to implement the recommendations of the Task Team on Income Support for People with Disabilities
- ⇒ Expand and improve a continuum of services that meet the needs of people with intellectual disabilities including people living at Valley View Centre who will be transitioned to replacement services

CITIZEN INDEPENDENCE SUPPORT: Citizen independence through self-reliance and prevention

Strategy

Lead and support child welfare transformation

Key Actions

- ⇒ Review and revise current legislation
- ⇒ Expand prevention services to help safely maintain children in the family home
- ⇒ Expand availability of the Positive Parenting Program

Strategy

Lead and support the *Housing Strategy for Saskatchewan*

Key Actions

- ⇒ Support housing stakeholders to influence an adequate supply of housing
- ⇒ Provide leadership for the Provincial Government in housing matters

Strategy

Improve quality of life and support community inclusion for people with disabilities

Key Actions

- ⇒ Develop a comprehensive Disability Strategy in consultation with the community and other Government ministries to help make Saskatchewan the best place in Canada to live for people with disabilities. The strategy will focus on:
 - ⇒ Community inclusion
 - ⇒ Housing
 - ⇒ Transportation
 - ⇒ Employment
 - ⇒ Education opportunities
 - ⇒ Support for families and caregivers

Strategy

Increase sustainable transitions to employment for Income Assistance clients

Key Actions

- ⇒ Implement targeted supports and approaches to reduce barriers to employment



Photo Credit: Saskatchewan Watershed Authority, photo by Jim Krosh-us, Five Mile Weir

EFFECTIVE and EFFICIENT ORGANIZATION: Effectiveness and efficiency of our people and our organization

Strategy

Build and maintain a work environment that embraces our core values of serving citizens, excellence and innovation, respect and integrity, and one team

Key Actions

- ⇒ Create a work environment that exemplifies the values and practices in Government's *Commitment to Excellence* and supports employee engagement
- ⇒ Support a highly skilled and inclusive Ministry workforce
- ⇒ Support a safe, healthy and respectful work environment by implementing healthy workplace practices, and best practices in Occupational Health and Safety

Strategy

Improve client outcomes

Key Actions

- ⇒ Apply a citizen-centred lens to ensure that client needs and expectations become the driving force behind service delivery
- ⇒ Improve the sustainability of the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation to meet the long-term needs of communities and citizens

Strategy

Enhance accountability of Ministry programs and services to ensure the best use of public funds

Key Actions

- ⇒ Implement:
 - ⇒ A risk management framework
 - ⇒ A business technology plan
 - ⇒ An improved performance management system
 - ⇒ Business process improvement efforts (Lean)
 - ⇒ Core program review and evaluation

Strategy

Improve service delivery through partnerships with other governments, Ministries and community partners

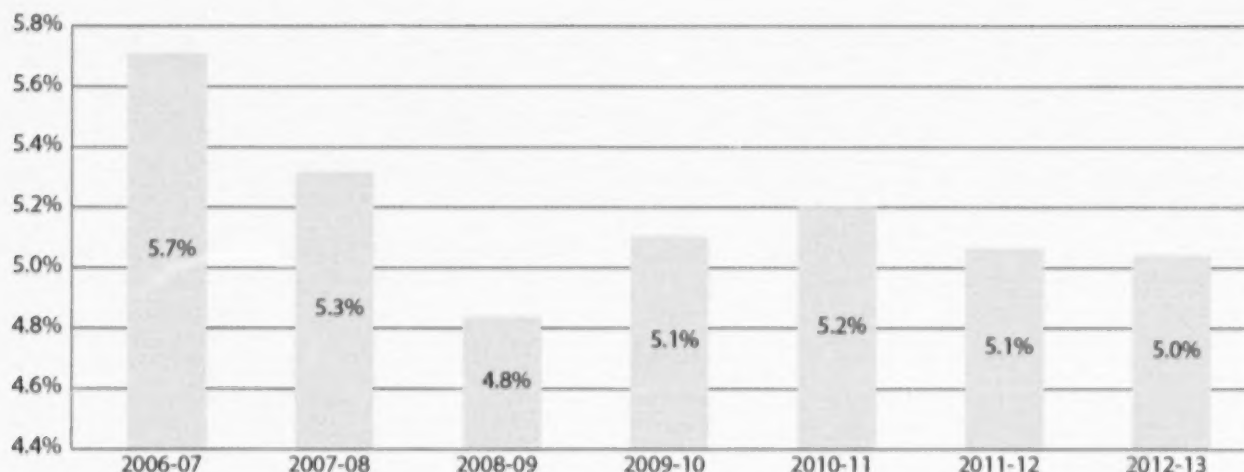
Key Actions

- ⇒ Support the *Child and Family Agenda* action plan
- ⇒ Lead collaboration across government to address key aspects of gender equality in the province
- ⇒ Build capacity and support sustainability in the Community-Based Organization sector

Performance Measures

Measure

Income Assistance Dependency Rate



Source: Ministry of Social Services Social Work Information Network (SWIN) and Saskatchewan Health Covered Population

Note: Income assistance recipients include beneficiaries of the Saskatchewan Assistance Program (SAP), Transitional Employment Allowance (TEA) and Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability (SAID) program.

Measure Description

The income assistance dependency rate reflects the proportion of Saskatchewan's off-reserve population aged 0 to 64 years who depend on provincial income assistance programs for some or all of their income.

The income assistance dependency rate is influenced by population change, the state of the economy, demand for labour and disability rates. The income assistance dependency rate decreased from 5.7 per cent in 2006-07 to 5.0 per cent in 2012-13.

Income assistance provides for the needs of individuals and families who cannot meet basic living costs. Income assistance recipients include beneficiaries from three major programs. The Saskatchewan Assistance Program (SAP) is designed for families and individuals who for various reasons, including illness or the need to care for young children, cannot fully participate in the labour force. The Transitional Employment Allowance (TEA) is a temporary income support program for people who are more job-ready and seeking employment. The Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability (SAID) program is an income support program for people with significant and enduring disabilities.

For employable clients, Saskatchewan's economic growth has translated into increased labour force opportunities and supported faster transitions into the workforce. The Ministry, in partnership with the Ministry of the Economy, helps clients transition to the labour force through measures such as Accelerated Connections to Employment, JobsFirst, and Employment Services for Parents. The Ministry also supports clients who are moving into the labour market with income supplements to bridge the transition from income assistance to independence.

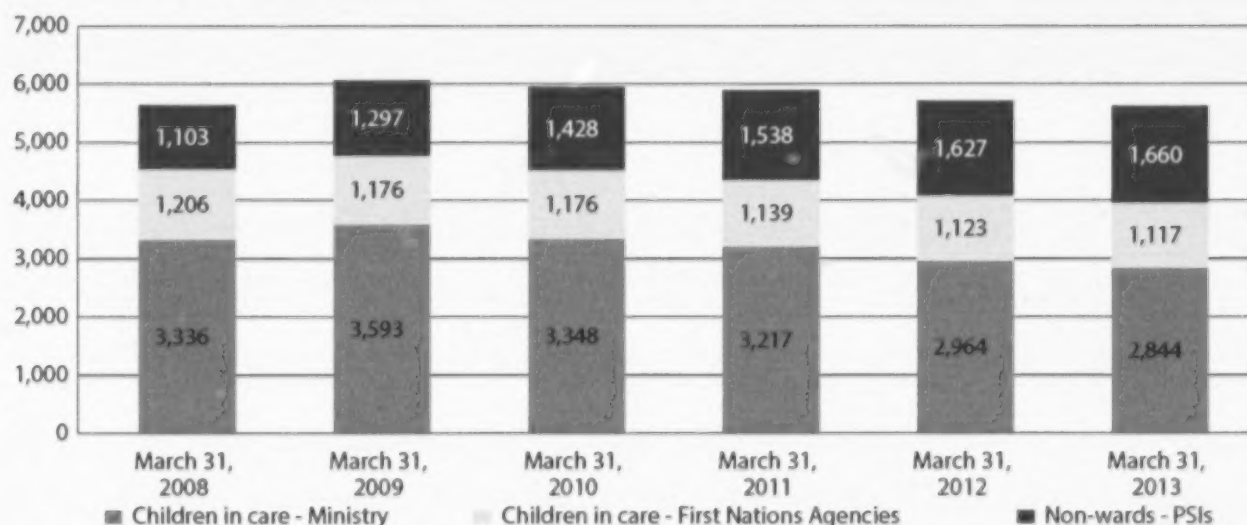
In 2014-15, the Ministry will continue to help clients meet basic needs and support the transition of employable clients toward economic self-sufficiency.



Photo Credit: Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport, Devona Hill Photography, Rolling Pines Golf and Country Resort

Measure

Number of Children in Out-of-Home Care



Data Source: Automated Client Index, Linkin and Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC)

- Notes:
1. AANDC data is reported annually on March 31 and later reconciled. The reported figures are an aggregation of both children in care and non-wards.
 2. Aggregation of the figures presented has the ability to distort the total number of children.
 3. In a PSI placement, the child has no legal status with the Ministry as the child is in the custody of a "Person Having a Sufficient Interest." Services provided to these children and families are voluntary as the Ministry does not have a legal mandate to become involved without the family's agreement.

Measure Description

This measure identifies trends in the Ministry's caseload of children in out-of-home care as a result of child maltreatment, and the Ministry's management of out-of-home care options.

In Saskatchewan, the primary reason for child maltreatment is neglect. Factors that impact families and child neglect include addictions and mental health issues, lack of parenting skills and family supports, isolation, poverty, housing issues, young parents and parents with low educational outcomes. The four-year decline in the number of children in out-of-home care is good news.

This caseload reflects the Ministry's engagement with vulnerable families to ensure that children at risk of neglect and abuse are safely sheltered in temporary or permanent out-of-home care. Out-of-home care options for children include placements in foster homes, group homes and with extended family members or others with whom the child has a significant relationship. Between 2013 and 2018, the Government of Saskatchewan intends to reduce by 10 per cent the number of children entering out-of-home care due to neglect.



Photo Credit: Tourism Saskatoon, City of Bridges

To the extent that out-of-home placements are necessary to keep children safe and give families time to stabilize and strengthen, the most important story told by this measure may be the degree to which family, social relationships, and culture shape and inform out-of-home care arrangements. Child welfare in Saskatchewan is undergoing a fundamental transformation that is intended to achieve a high level of engagement with First Nations and Métis partners, support and strengthen family structures and relationships, and respect cultural integrity.

This is consistent with Government's commitment to improve the quality of life for all Saskatchewan citizens and families, and with the goals of the *Child and Family Agenda*: children get a good start in life; youth are prepared for their future; families are strong, and communities are supportive. The imperative to provide prevention services and care for vulnerable children, including culturally appropriate options for First Nations and Métis children, is paramount. Success in work to transform child welfare will be reflected in improved child safety and well-being, and a reduction in the number of cases of children in the care of the Ministry.

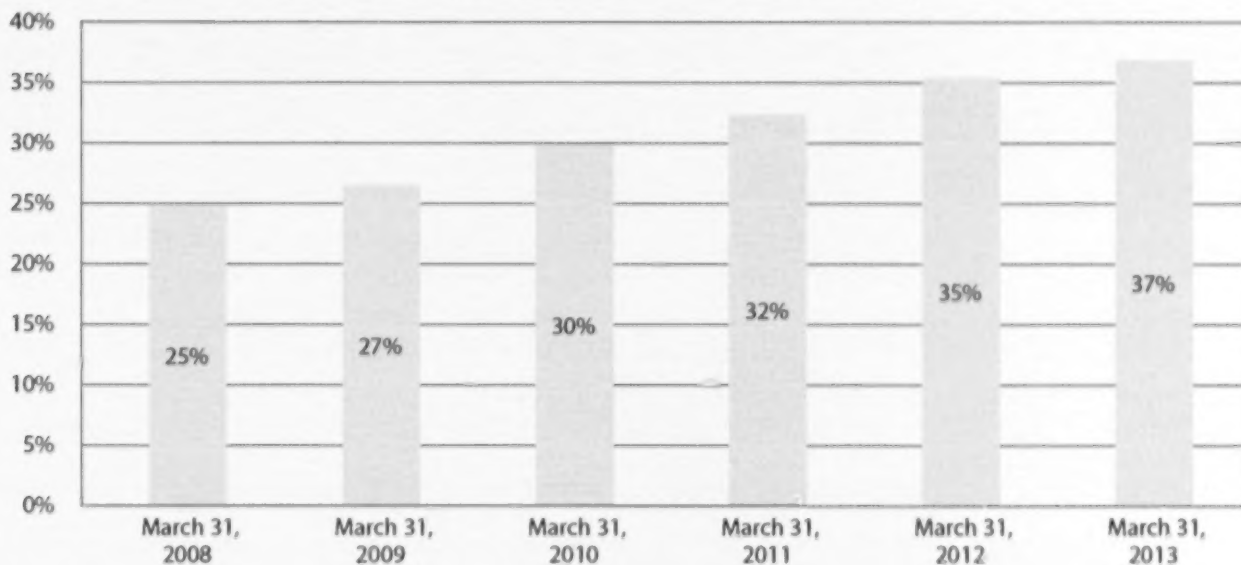
In 2014-15, the Ministry will expand its focus on in-home support and prevention services to support at-risk families, help maintain children safely in the family home, and undertake a review and revision of child welfare legislation.



Photo Credit: Tourism Saskatchewan, Greg Huszar Photography, Over the Hill Orchards

Measure

Proportion of Children Placed in Out-of-Home Care with Extended Family Members or “Persons of Sufficient Interest”



Data Source: Ministry of Social Services Automated Client Index and Linkin.

Measure Description

This measure reflects the proportion of children in out-of-home care who are placed with extended family or other caregivers with whom the child has a significant relationship.

Placing children who are at risk of abuse or neglect with extended family, or other caregivers with whom a child has an existing and significant relationship, helps maintain important ties to family and community, and may be less traumatic for a child than being placed in foster care. Over the past six years, the number of children placed with extended family and “persons of sufficient interest” has nearly doubled and continues to grow as the number of children in care of the Ministry declines.

These are positive trends that reflect a deliberate and successful shift in child welfare philosophy and practice, a stronger voice for First Nations and Métis people, and the increased influence of family, community and culture in shaping the care of Saskatchewan children. This work supports the four goals of the *Child and Family Agenda*: children get a good start in life; youth are prepared for their futures; families are strong, and communities are supportive.

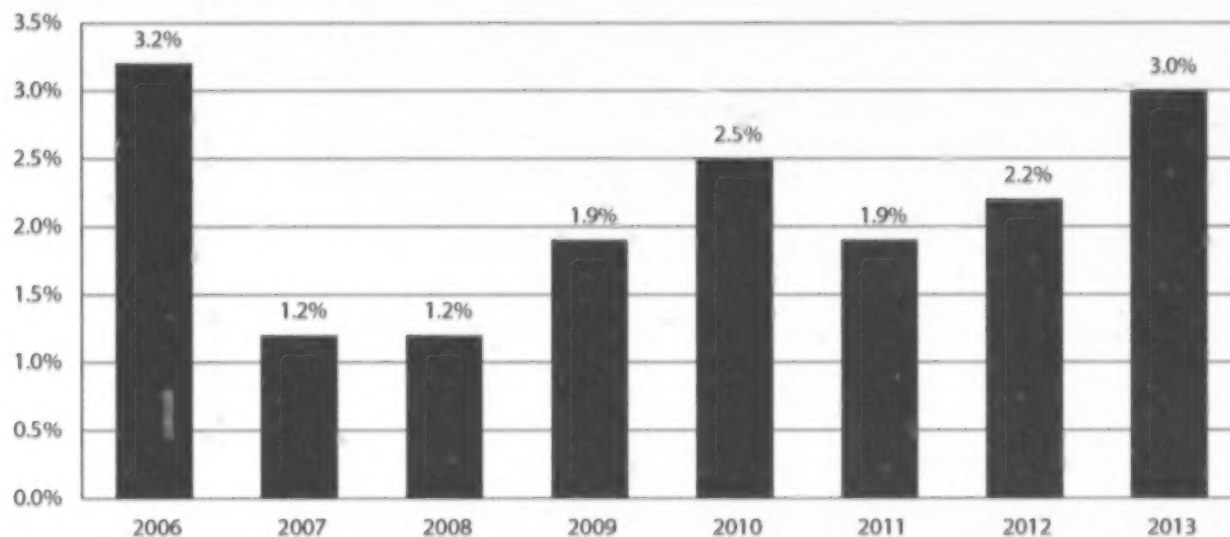
In 2014-15, the Ministry will continue its work to increase the security and safety of Saskatchewan children by collaborating with First Nations and Métis partners to transform the province's child welfare system, expand prevention services that help families safely keep their children at home, review and revise child welfare legislation, and increase support for extended family caregivers.



Photo Credit: Ministry of Education

Measure

Average Provincial Rental Vacancy Rate



Source: Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (DMHC), Biannual Rental Market Survey, October 2013.

Measure Description

The average provincial rental vacancy rate measures the percentage of privately-initiated apartment units in projects of three or more units, of all bedroom types, that is available for immediate rental. This measure supports commitments in the *Plan for Growth*.

Between October 2012 and October 2013, the average vacancy rate in Saskatchewan's urban centres rose by 0.8 per cent to 3.0 per cent, the province's benchmark rate at which tenants have options and investment is profitable for owners. The increase in the average vacancy rate is, in part, attributable to the positive impact of housing-related initiatives and programs being funded and implemented through *A Strong Foundation - the Housing Strategy for Saskatchewan*, and the *Plan for Growth*.

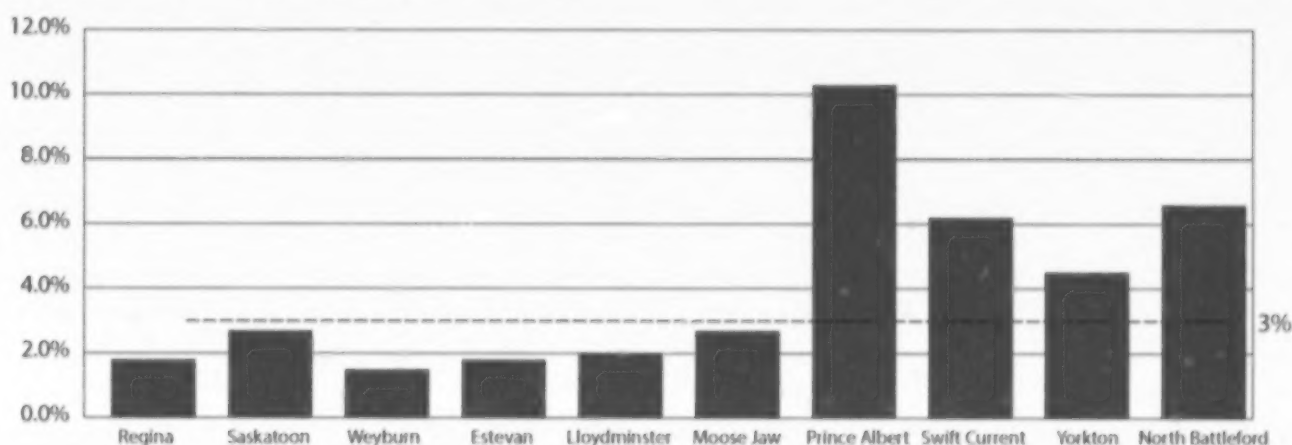
The number of rental housing units started in 2013 was nearly 34 times higher than in 2006. There were 1,277 urban rental market starts, representing a 19.1 per cent increase over 2012. New federal and provincial funding streams have dramatically increased the number of rental housing units available for low-to-moderate-income households.

The province's growing economy and population have created a strong demand for rental and homeownership housing in Saskatchewan communities. Stable and affordable housing enables people to work, engage in education and skills training opportunities, increase financial savings and participate in community life. While the situation in the housing sector is strongly linked to the health of the economy, Government actions play a key role in ensuring access to safe, quality housing to low-income and moderate-income earners. This is consistent with Government's commitment to sustain growth and an affordable quality of life for the citizens of the province.

Photo Credit, Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport, photo by Paul Austring, Holy Trinity Anglican Church, Stanley Mission, Lac La Ronge Provincial Park

Measure

Vacancy Rate in Saskatchewan's 10 Largest Communities



Source: Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), Biannual Rental Market Survey, October 2013.

Measure Description

This measure shows the proportion of Saskatchewan's 10 largest communities that have a three per cent vacancy rate. All 10 centres have populations of 10,000 or more. This measure supports commitments in the *Plan for Growth*.

While the target average vacancy rate of three per cent has been achieved provincially, some communities including Regina, Estevan and Weyburn, continue to experience low vacancy rates while Prince Albert, Swift Current and North Battleford tend to have higher vacancy rates.

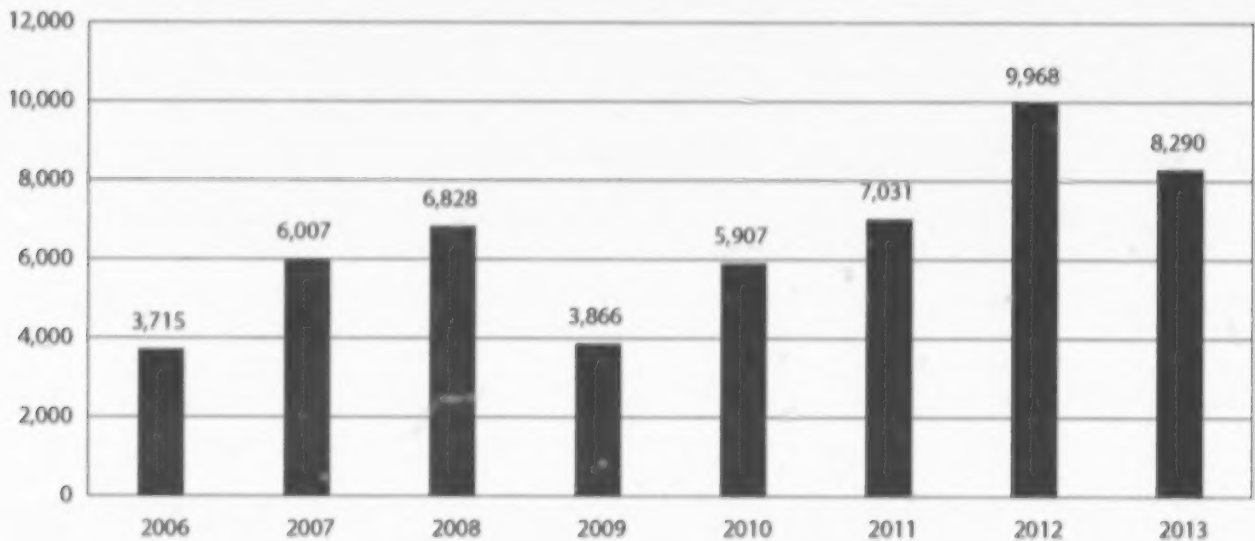
In 2014-15 and forward, the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation will continue to assess the housing market and target investments in new housing to ensure Saskatchewan citizens have safe and affordable housing available to them.



Photo Credit: Tourism Saskatoon, Broadway Bridge

Measure

Annual Housing Starts



Source: Statistics Canada, Housing Starts By Province, January 24, 2014.

Measure Description

This measure tracks the annual number of new housing starts across the province as of December 31st each year.

To maintain a balanced provincial housing market, approximately 8,000 units are needed annually to accommodate the expected population of 1.2 million by 2020. In 2013, there were 8,290 new housing starts, which exceeded the 8,000-unit annual target.

The Ministry will support communities to proactively develop community housing options, invest in better access to safe, quality and affordable housing initiatives, maintain existing government-supported housing, and develop entry-level, multi-unit housing options in Regina, Moose Jaw and Prince Albert.

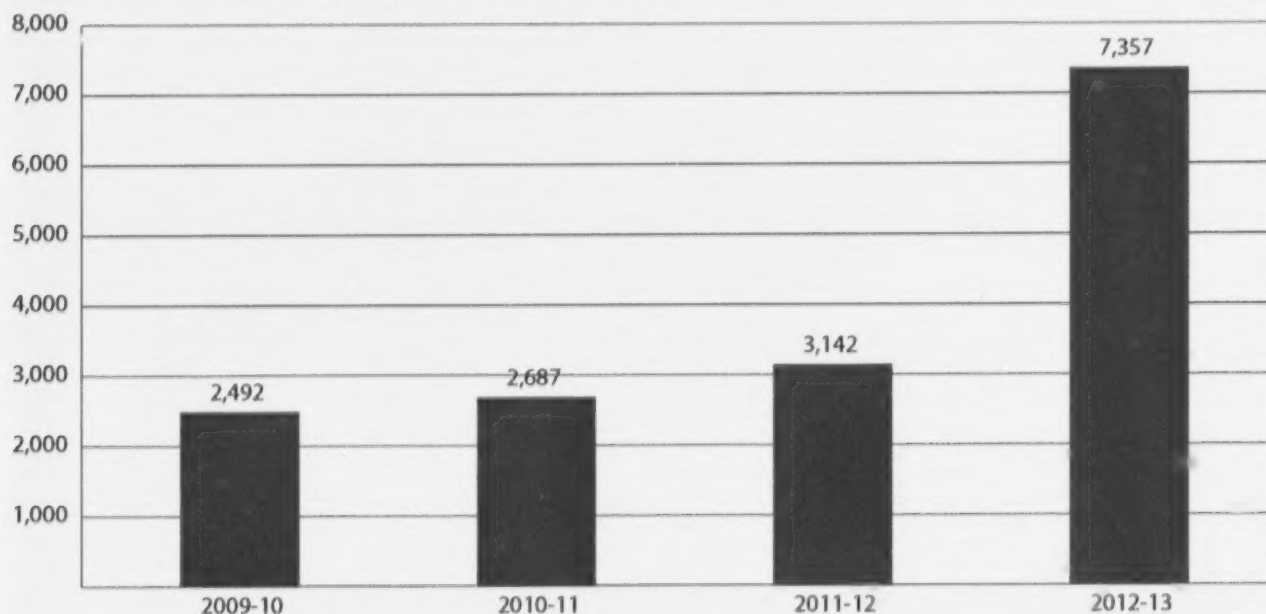
In 2014-15, the Ministry will continue to work with housing sector partners to implement strategies to meet the housing needs of Saskatchewan's citizens. This measure supports a commitment in the *Plan for Growth*.



Photo Credit: Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport, Hans-Gerhard Pfaff, Saskatchewan Legislative Building

Measure

Number of Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability (SAID) Beneficiaries



Source: Ministry of Social Services Social Worker Information Network (SWIN), Income Assistance Report ER02, monthly average April to March 2010-11 to 2012-13, and monthly average December to March of 2009-10.

Measure Description

This measure identifies and tracks the number of households enrolled in the Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability (SAID) program.

Enrollment more than doubled in 2012-13, rising from an average of 3,142 cases in 2011-12 to 7,357 in 2012-13. This growth was due to the planned expansion of the SAID program. During the first three years of the program (2009-10 to 2011-12), enrollment was limited to individuals who have documented long-term disabilities and live in residential care facilities, family homes and group homes. Beginning in 2012-13, the program was expanded to support people with disabilities who live independently in their own homes or rented suites.

This measure reflects Government's commitment to make Saskatchewan the best place in Canada to live for people with disabilities. SAID is an indicator of Government's commitment to provide people with significant and enduring disabilities an income assistance program which meets their unique needs and is distinct from social assistance.

In 2014-15, the Ministry will continue to make every effort possible to provide information about SAID to people who may be eligible for the benefit. Future work to improve the quality of life for people with disabilities will include increases to living income benefits as well as enhancements to the SAID service delivery model.

Photo Credit: Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport, Greg Huszar Photography, Elbow Marina

Measure

Workforce Diversity

	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2012-13 SK Public Service
Aboriginal persons	12.2%	12.5%	12.7%	12.3%	11.7%	12.3%	11.7%
Persons with a disability	3.2	3.2	3.2	2.9	3.3	3.5	2.9
Persons of visible minority	3.8	4.1	4.3	3.5	4.4	4.2	4.3
Women in senior management	36.4	46.2	43.8	50.0	57.9	52.4	40.0
Women in middle management and other management positions	54.2	60.0	62.5	60.4	54.0	56.9	42.0
Youth	15.4	14.7	15.5	15.5	16.4	16.1	13.3

Source: Government of Saskatchewan Multi-Informational Database Application System (MIDAS) at March 30th.

Measure Description

This measure reflects the Ministry's representation of Aboriginal people, people with disabilities, visible minorities, women and youth in the Ministry.

There is a compelling business case for organizations to achieve a diverse workforce. Increasing employee diversity will shape the Ministry's workforce so it more closely reflects the provincial population, capitalizes on the available labour force and produces thoughtful, creative solutions for Ministry clients.

The representation of persons of visible minority and youth remains steady. The representation of Aboriginal persons, persons with a disability and women in middle management and other management positions continues to improve, and is on par with--or higher than-- the representation in government as a whole.

In 2014-15, the Ministry's workforce plan will continue to support diversity initiatives and shape an inclusive work environment that maximizes employee contributions. As an inclusive employer with a diverse and representative workforce, the Ministry will be well-positioned to serve clients more effectively, attract and retain employees, meet current and future skill shortages, and respond to complex challenges and emerging opportunities.



Photo Credit: Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport, photo by Paul Astring, Buffalo Narrows

Measure

Proportion of People Living at Valley View Centre Transitioned to the Community

Measure Description

This new measure will identify the Ministry's progress in meeting Government's commitment to transition people currently living at Valley View Centre to community-based care.

Transitioning people who currently live at Valley View Centre to the community is a multi-stage, person-centred process designed to ensure the needs of each are met. Planning is currently underway. The Ministry anticipates the first of the current 189 residents will transition to community-based care beginning in 2014-15.

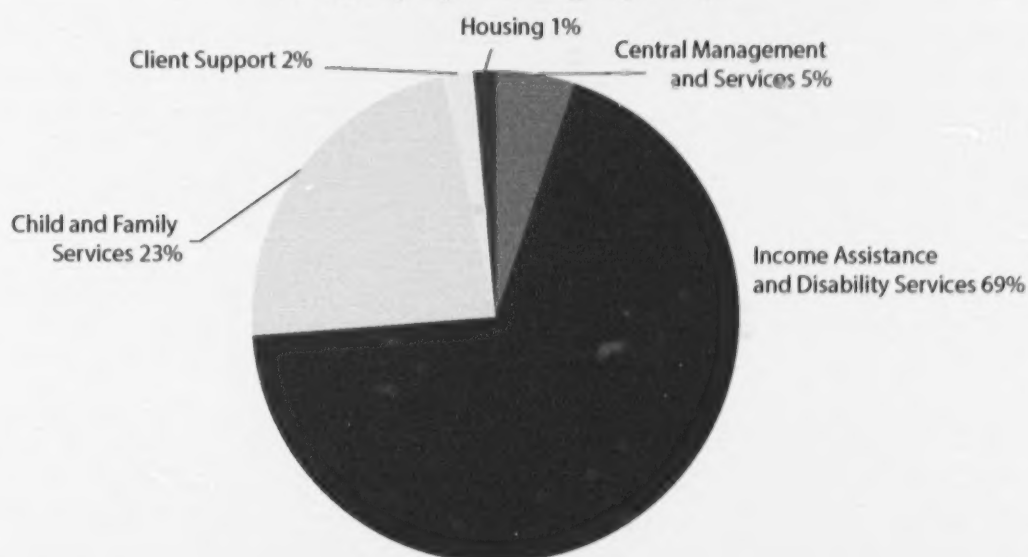
Financial Summary

2014-15 Estimates	(in thousands of dollars)
Central Management and Services	50,088
Income Assistance and Disability Services	660,457
Child and Family Services	218,397
Client Support	19,372
Housing	14,672
Ministry Appropriation	962,986
Capital Asset Acquisitions	(11,135)
Non-Appropriated Expense Adjustment	4,693
Ministry Expense	956,544

FTE Staff Complement	1,732.0
-----------------------------	----------------

For more information, see the Budget Estimates at: <http://www.saskatchewan.ca/budget>

Ministry Spending by Area



Highlights

2014-15 Budget Highlights:

The Government of Saskatchewan is delivering on a commitment in the *Plan for Growth* to invest in a higher quality of life for all Saskatchewan citizens. The Ministry of Social Services' 2014-15 budget includes commitments to programs and services for our province's most vulnerable residents. Highlights of these funding commitments include:

Income Assistance and Disability Supports

Honouring our commitment to work towards making Saskatchewan the best place in Canada for people living with disabilities, our 2014-15 budget provides for third year increases in a four-year commitment to make enhancements to the Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability (SAID) program and recognizes the growth in caseload for this program. In June 2014, the following increases will be implemented for SAID:

- ⇒ Couples living independently will receive a \$55 increase;
- ⇒ Single individuals living independently will receive an increase of \$50; and,
- ⇒ People in residential care will receive an additional \$20 per month.

Additional increases in this area include:

- ⇒ An increase of \$20.4 million for disability Community-Based Organizations that provide spaces and programming for people with intellectual disabilities. Included in this increase is funding to ensure a seamless transition of people living at Valley View Centre to the community;
- ⇒ A \$4.5 million increase for the Saskatchewan Rental Housing Supplement, to keep pace with increasing caseloads;
- ⇒ An additional \$321,000 for the Personal Care Home Benefit to increase the monthly income threshold from \$1,875 to \$1,950; and
- ⇒ \$275,000 to support the development of a comprehensive Disability Strategy

Housing

The 2014-15 Ministry budget continues the Province's commitment to the *Saskatchewan Advantage Housing Plan* and to the *Housing Strategy for Saskatchewan* to provide better access to safe, quality and affordable housing for Saskatchewan people. Our continued investment supports the following initiatives:

- ⇒ \$9.2 million increase for the first year of a five-year extension of the federal/provincial bilateral Affordable Housing Agreement (Investment in Affordable Housing 2011 to 2014) to be used for new affordable housing supply, home renovations, home adaptations, and rent/housing supplements;
- ⇒ \$2.9 million for the Rental Construction Incentive and the Affordable Home Ownership Program; and
- ⇒ \$750,000 for additional support to assist Habitat for Humanity in the development of another 12 homes across the province.

Photo Credit: Saskatchewan Watershed Authority, photo by Vicki East, Rafferty Reservoir

Child and Family Services

In 2014-15, the Ministry will continue working with First Nations and Métis partner organizations to renew the child welfare system and enhance prevention supports to enable children to safely remain in the family home.





Our support in the coming year includes an \$8.5 million increase for Child Welfare Transformation, part of the Saskatchewan Child and Family Agenda, including:

- ⇒ \$6.2 million to increase supports for agencies that provide services for children in care and their families; and
- ⇒ \$2.3 million increase to supports for assisted adoption, foster care, extended family care and individualized preventative services.

For More Information

Please visit the Ministry's website at <http://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/ministries/social-services> for more information on the Ministry's programs and services.

Front Page Photo Credits

			
Canola and flax fields	Biking, Narrow Hills Provincial Park	Over the Hill Orchards	Saskatchewan Legislative Building
Photographer, Charles Melnick	Greg Huszar Photography	Greg Huszar Photography	Greg Huszar Photography